

ISABEL
AND THE
HUNGRY COYOTE
Isabel y el coyote hambriento



Written by / Escrito por Keith Polette
Illustrated by / Ilustrado por Esther Szegedy

A little girl on her way to Grandma's house. A basket of goodies. A lurking scoundrel. Sound familiar? Yes, but *this* time, the Chihuahua Desert of the American southwest is the setting for a spiced-up retelling of the classic *Little Red Riding Hood* story.

Fiery tamales and chili sauce become the villain's downfall when spunky Isabel outwits the cunning coyote with self-reliance, style and daring.

Awards for this book include:

Golden Spur Award Nominee
—Texas Reading Association

Legacy Book Award—Children's Finalist

Georgia State Reading Association
Recommended Reading List

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Moab, Utah 84532

*To my family.
—Keith*

*To Alain, who's always there.
—Esther*

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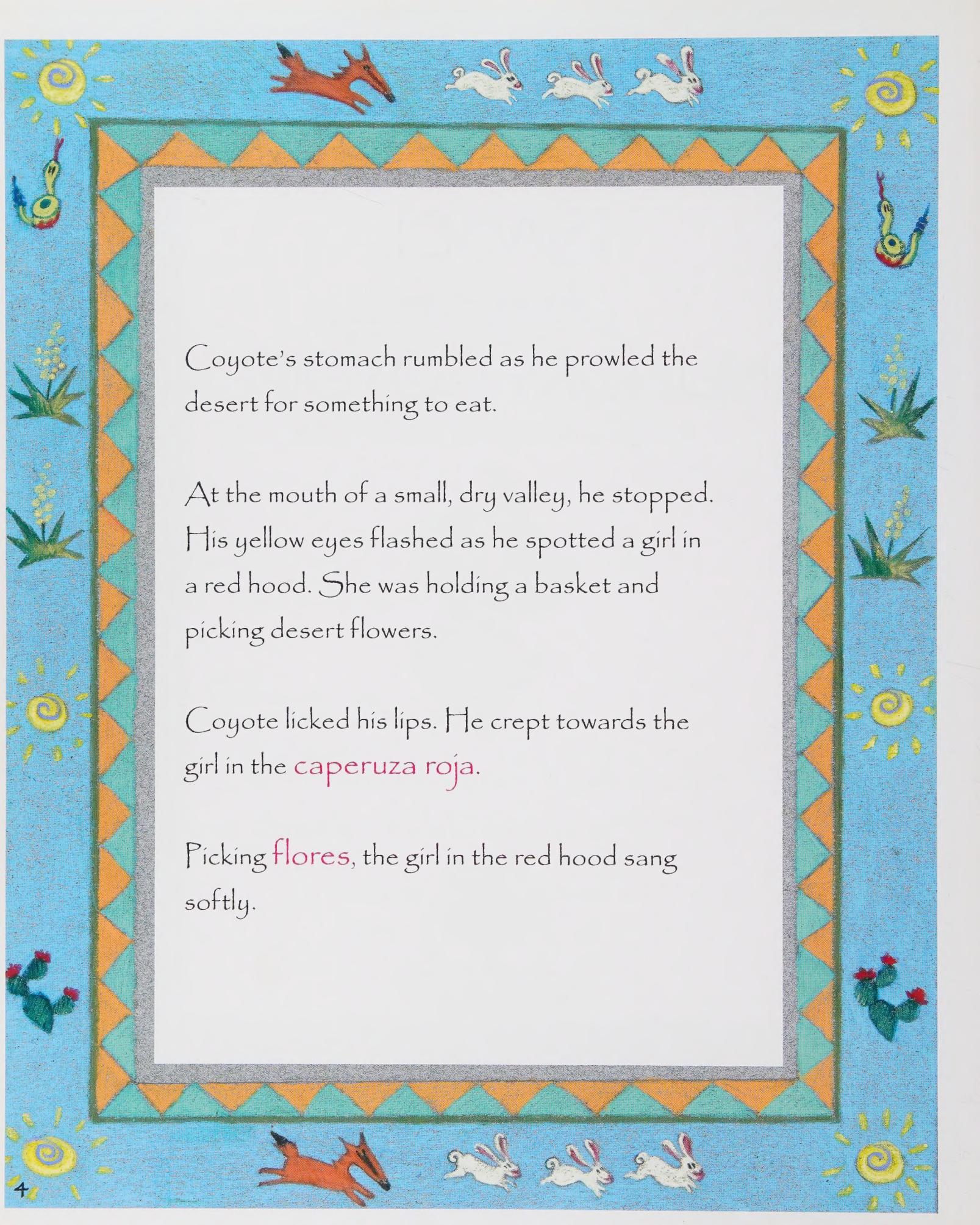
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Coyote's stomach rumbled as he prowled the desert for something to eat.

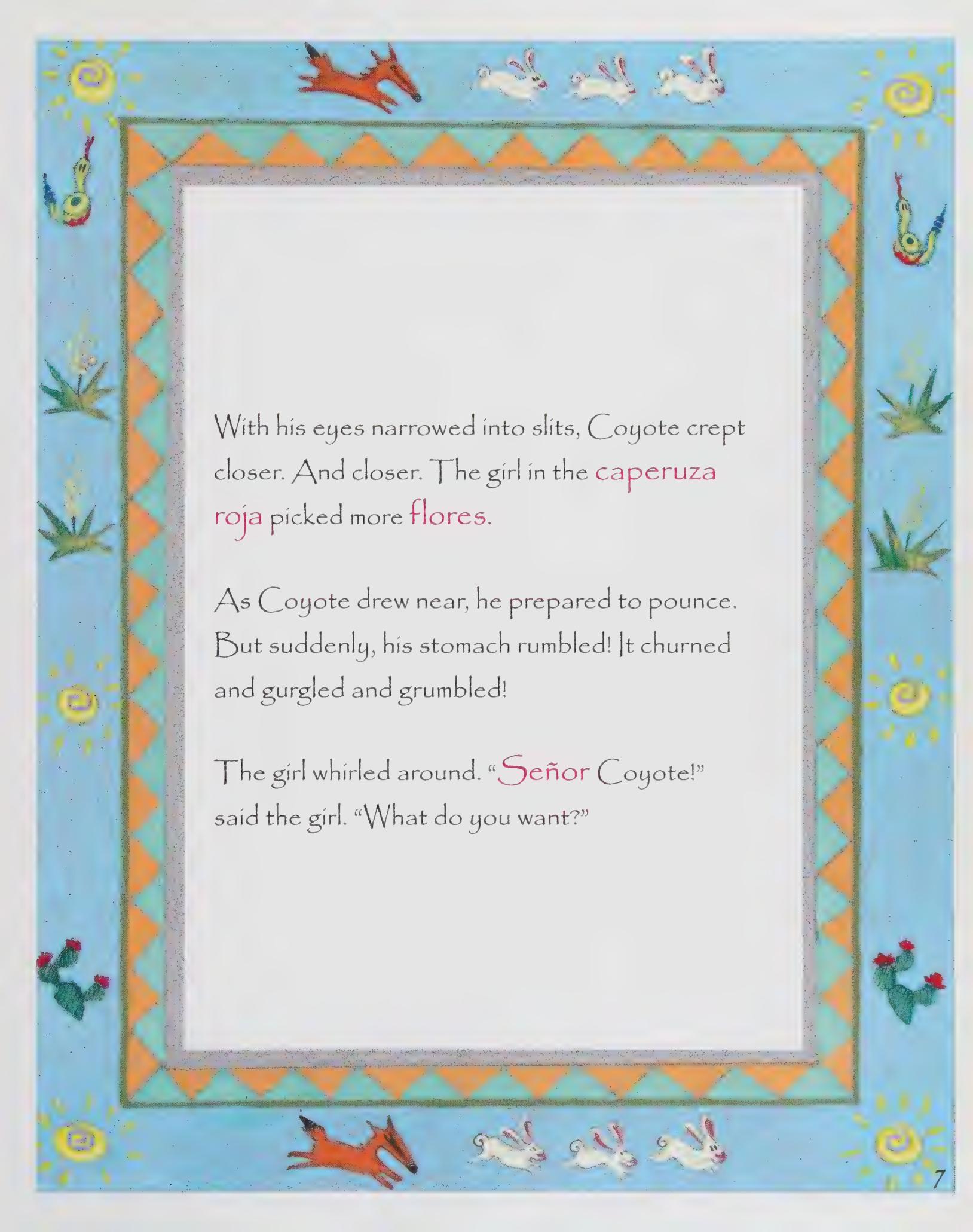
At the mouth of a small, dry valley, he stopped. His yellow eyes flashed as he spotted a girl in a red hood. She was holding a basket and picking desert flowers.

Coyote licked his lips. He crept towards the girl in the **caperuza roja**.

Picking **flores**, the girl in the red hood sang softly.







With his eyes narrowed into slits, Coyote crept closer. And closer. The girl in the **caperuza roja** picked more **flores**.

As Coyote drew near, he prepared to pounce. But suddenly, his stomach rumbled! It churned and gurgled and grumbled!

The girl whirled around. “**Señor** Coyote!” said the girl. “What do you want?”



“Ay,” said Coyote, as his stomach rumbled.
“I wanted to say, ah, good morning.”

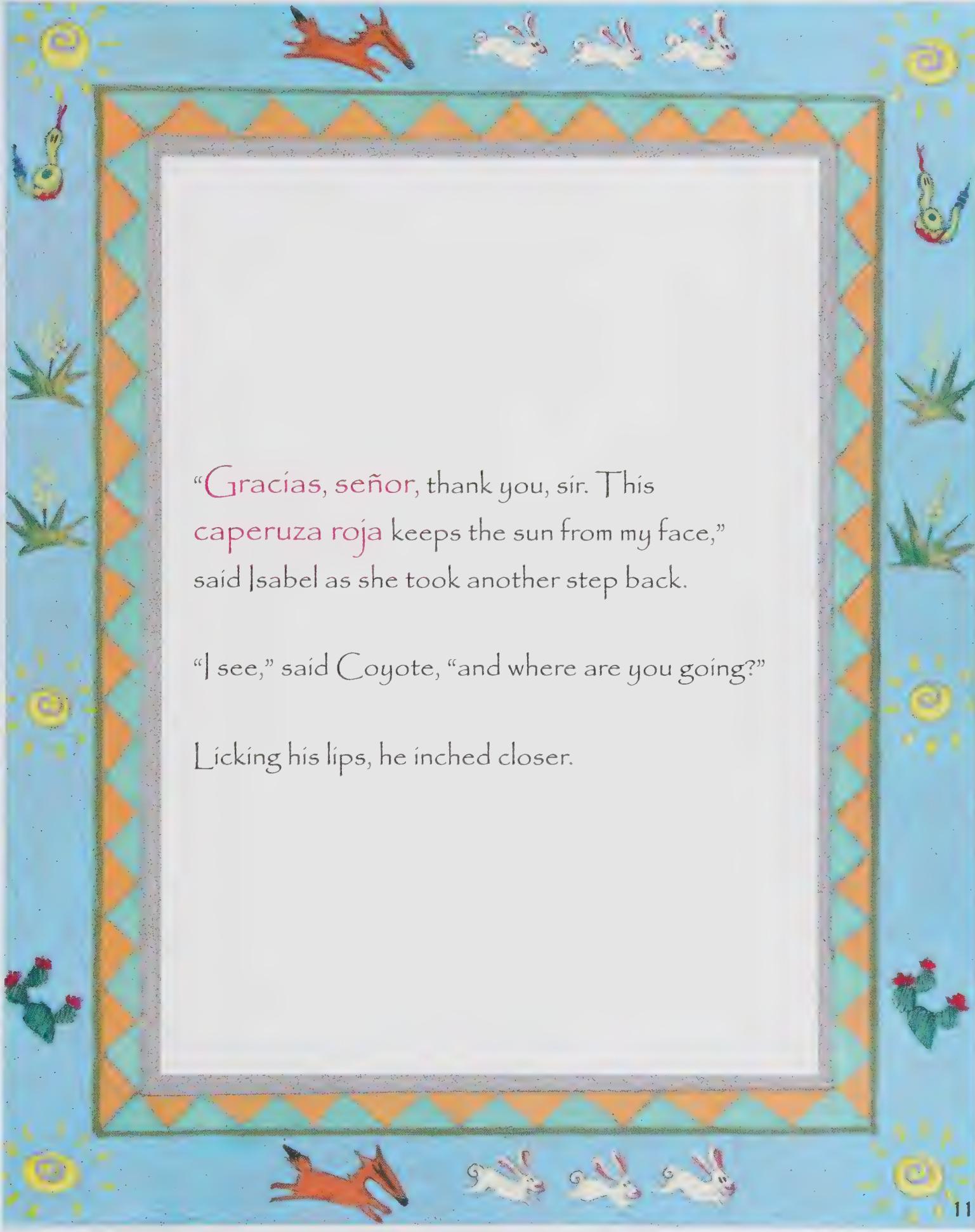
“Buenos días to you,” said the girl as she took a step back. “My name is Isabel.”

“My, that is a pretty red hood you are wearing Isabel,” said Coyote.

His yellow eyes flashed. He inched closer to her.



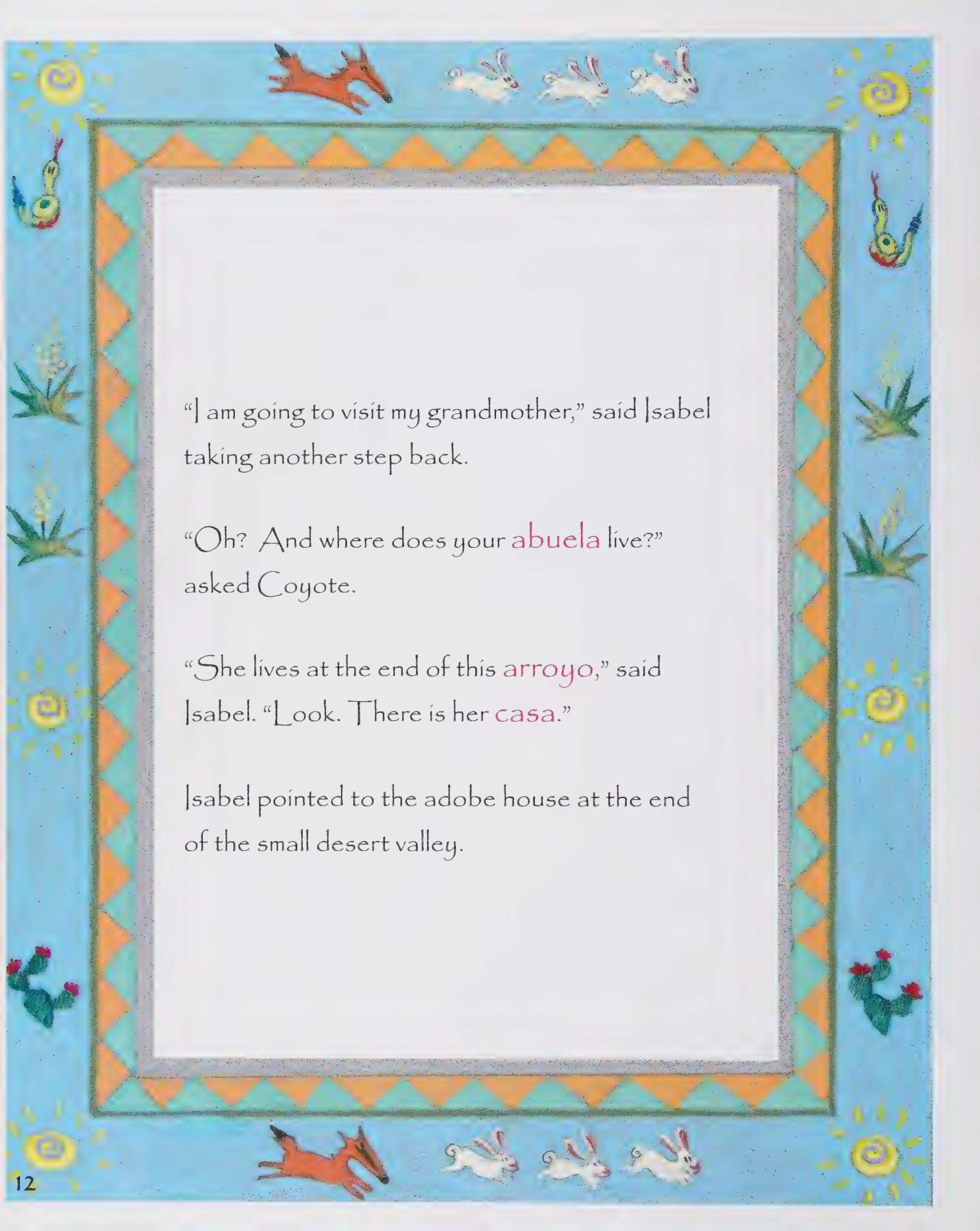




“*Gracias, señor*, thank you, sir. This *caperuza roja* keeps the sun from my face,” said Isabel as she took another step back.

“I see,” said Coyote, “and where are you going?”

Licking his lips, he inched closer.



"I am going to visit my grandmother," said Isabel taking another step back.

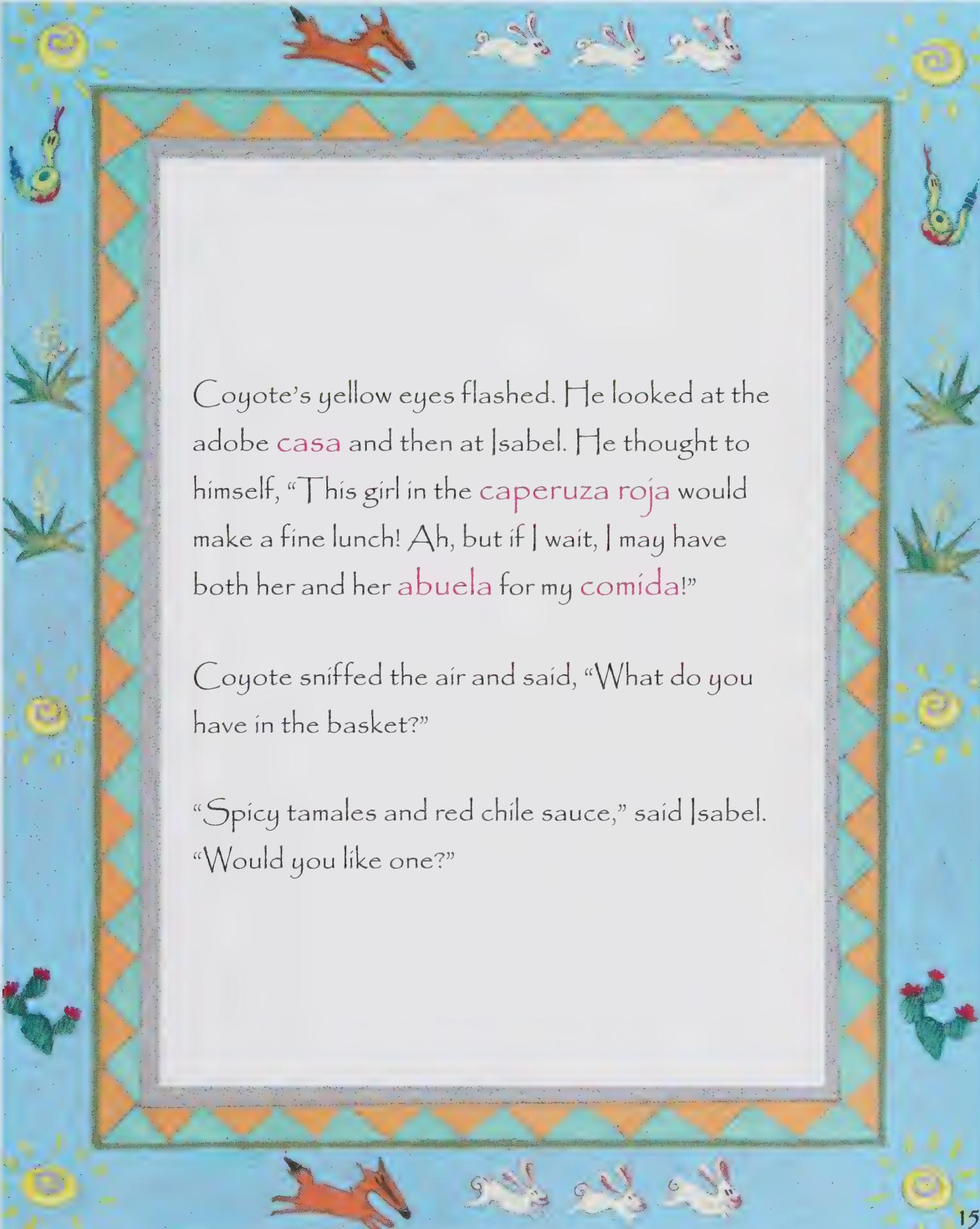
"Oh? And where does your **abuela** live?" asked Coyote.

"She lives at the end of this **arroyo**," said Isabel. "Look. There is her **casa**."

Isabel pointed to the adobe house at the end of the small desert valley.



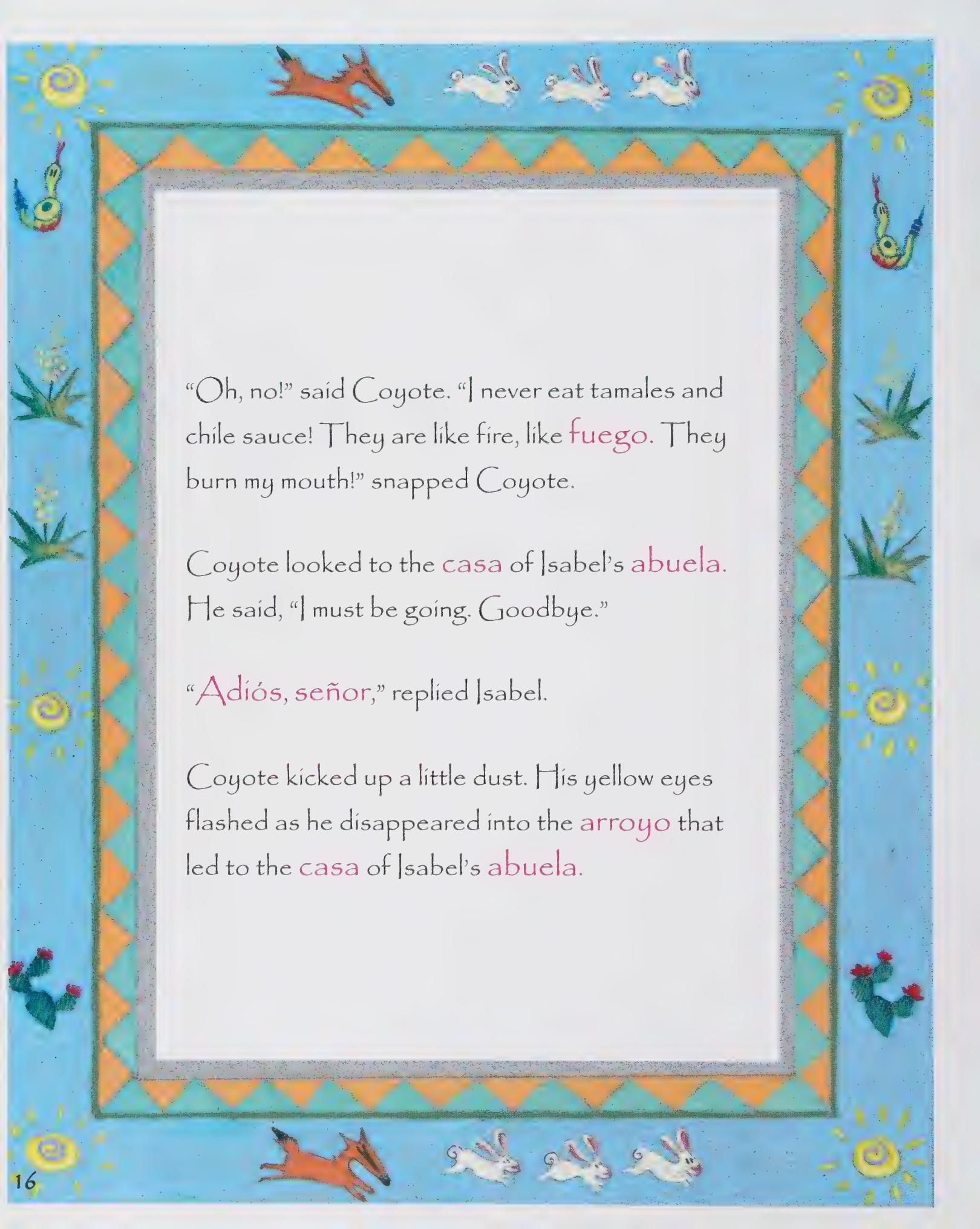




Coyote's yellow eyes flashed. He looked at the adobe **casa** and then at Isabel. He thought to himself, "This girl in the **caperuza roja** would make a fine lunch! Ah, but if I wait, I may have both her and her **abuela** for my **comida**!"

Coyote sniffed the air and said, "What do you have in the basket?"

"Spicy tamales and red chile sauce," said Isabel.
"Would you like one?"



“Oh, no!” said Coyote. “I never eat tamales and chile sauce! They are like fire, like *fuego*. They burn my mouth!” snapped Coyote.

Coyote looked to the *casa* of Isabel’s *abuela*. He said, “I must be going. Goodbye.”

“*Adiós, señor*,” replied Isabel.

Coyote kicked up a little dust. His yellow eyes flashed as he disappeared into the *arroyo* that led to the *casa* of Isabel’s *abuela*.





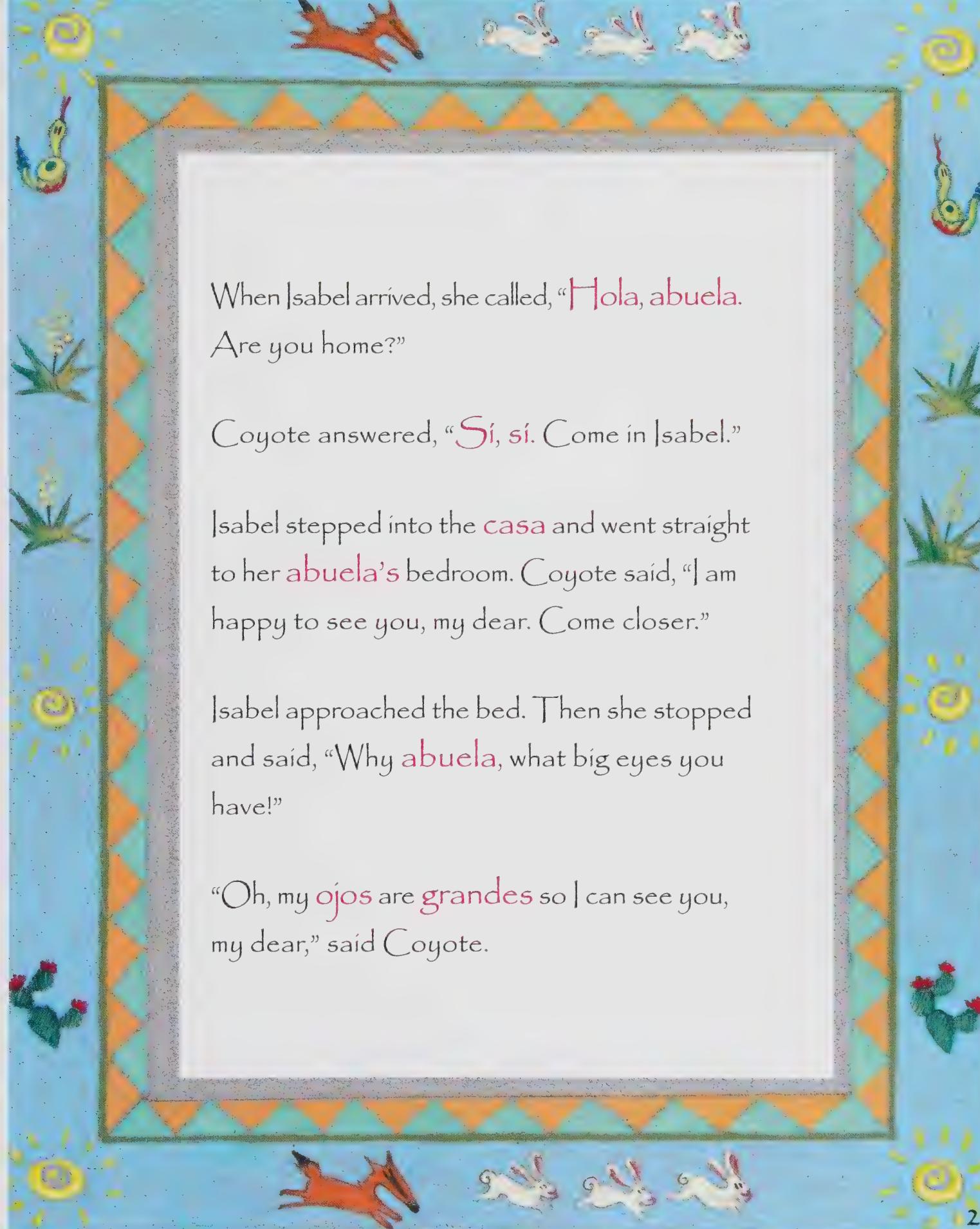
When Coyote arrived at **la casa de abuela**, he found the door open. Licking his lips, he crept inside. The **casa** was silent and still.

Coyote looked into each room. But he did not see Isabel's **abuela**.

Just then, he heard Isabel lift the latch of the gate outside. Coyote scampered into the **abuela's** bedroom. He put on the **abuela's** nightgown. He jumped into the **abuela's** bed and pulled the covers up to his chin.







When Isabel arrived, she called, “**Hola, abuela.**
Are you home?”

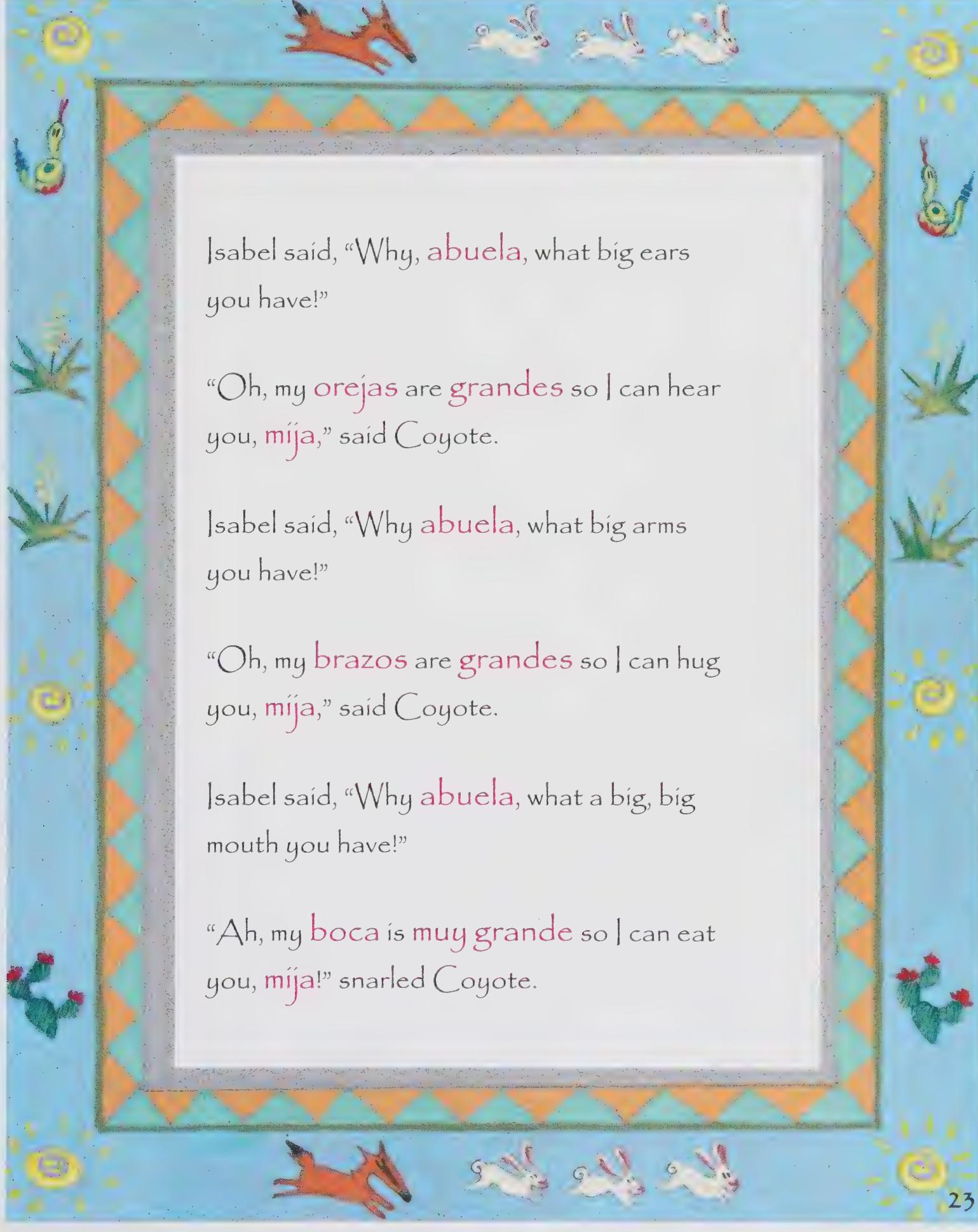
Coyote answered, “**Sí, sí.** Come in Isabel.”

Isabel stepped into the **casa** and went straight to her **abuela’s** bedroom. Coyote said, “I am happy to see you, my dear. Come closer.”

Isabel approached the bed. Then she stopped and said, “Why **abuela**, what big eyes you have!”

“Oh, my **ojos** are **grandes** so I can see you, my dear,” said Coyote.





Isabel said, "Why, **abuela**, what big ears
you have!"

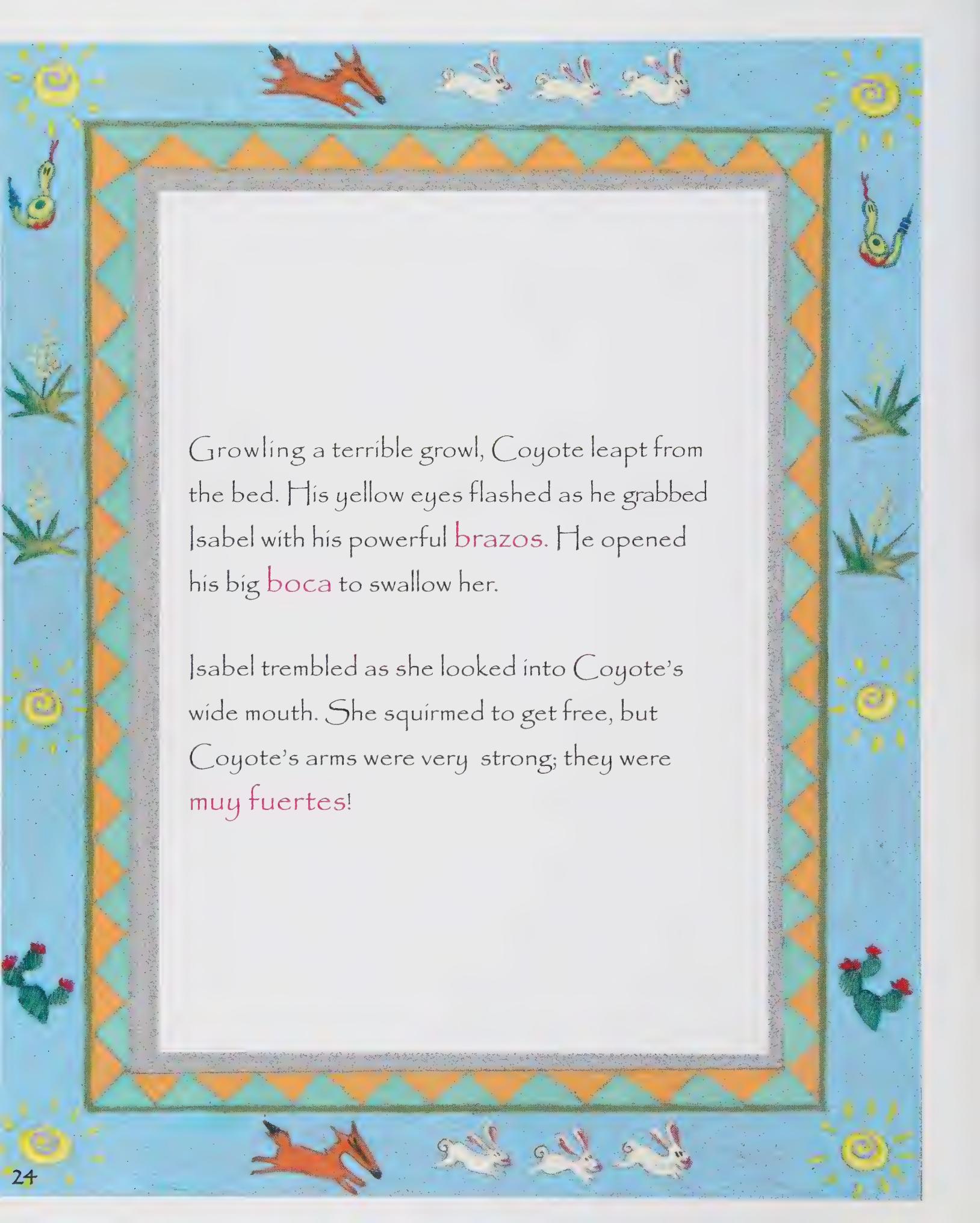
"Oh, my **orejas** are **grandes** so I can hear
you, **mija**," said Coyote.

Isabel said, "Why **abuela**, what big arms
you have!"

"Oh, my **brazos** are **grandes** so I can hug
you, **mija**," said Coyote.

Isabel said, "Why **abuela**, what a big, big
mouth you have!"

"Ah, my **boca** is **muy grande** so I can eat
you, **mija**!" snarled Coyote.

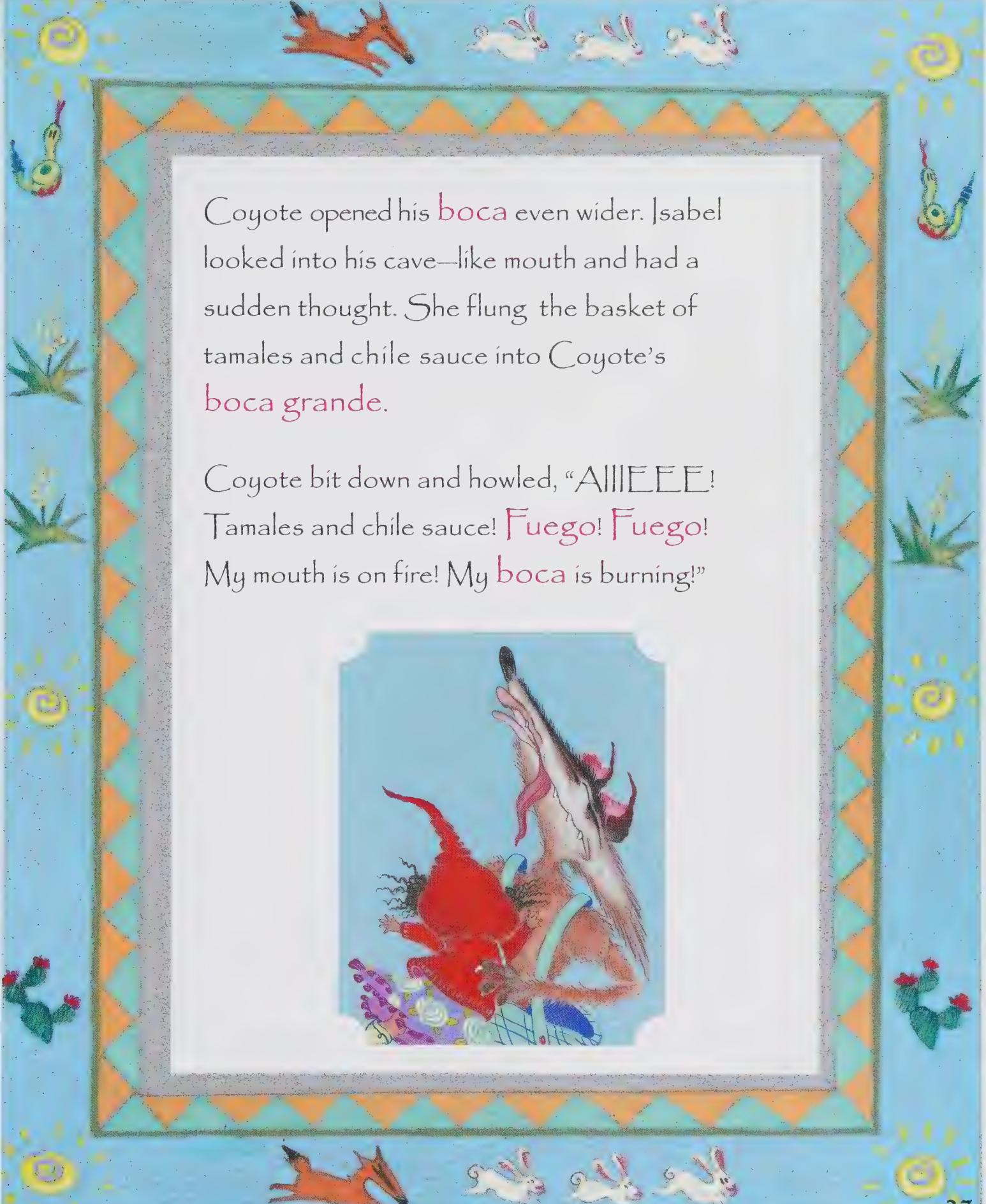


Growling a terrible growl, Coyote leapt from the bed. His yellow eyes flashed as he grabbed Isabel with his powerful **brazos**. He opened his big **boca** to swallow her.

Isabel trembled as she looked into Coyote's wide mouth. She squirmed to get free, but Coyote's arms were very strong; they were **muy fuertes!**







Coyote opened his **boca** even wider. Isabel looked into his cave-like mouth and had a sudden thought. She flung the basket of tamales and chile sauce into Coyote's **boca grande**.

Coyote bit down and howled, "AIIIEEE!
Tamales and chile sauce! **Fuego! Fuego!**
My mouth is on fire! My **boca** is burning!"





Coyote dropped Isabel and raced out of the **casa**. He scurried through the gate and scampered into the **arroyo**, howling all the while.

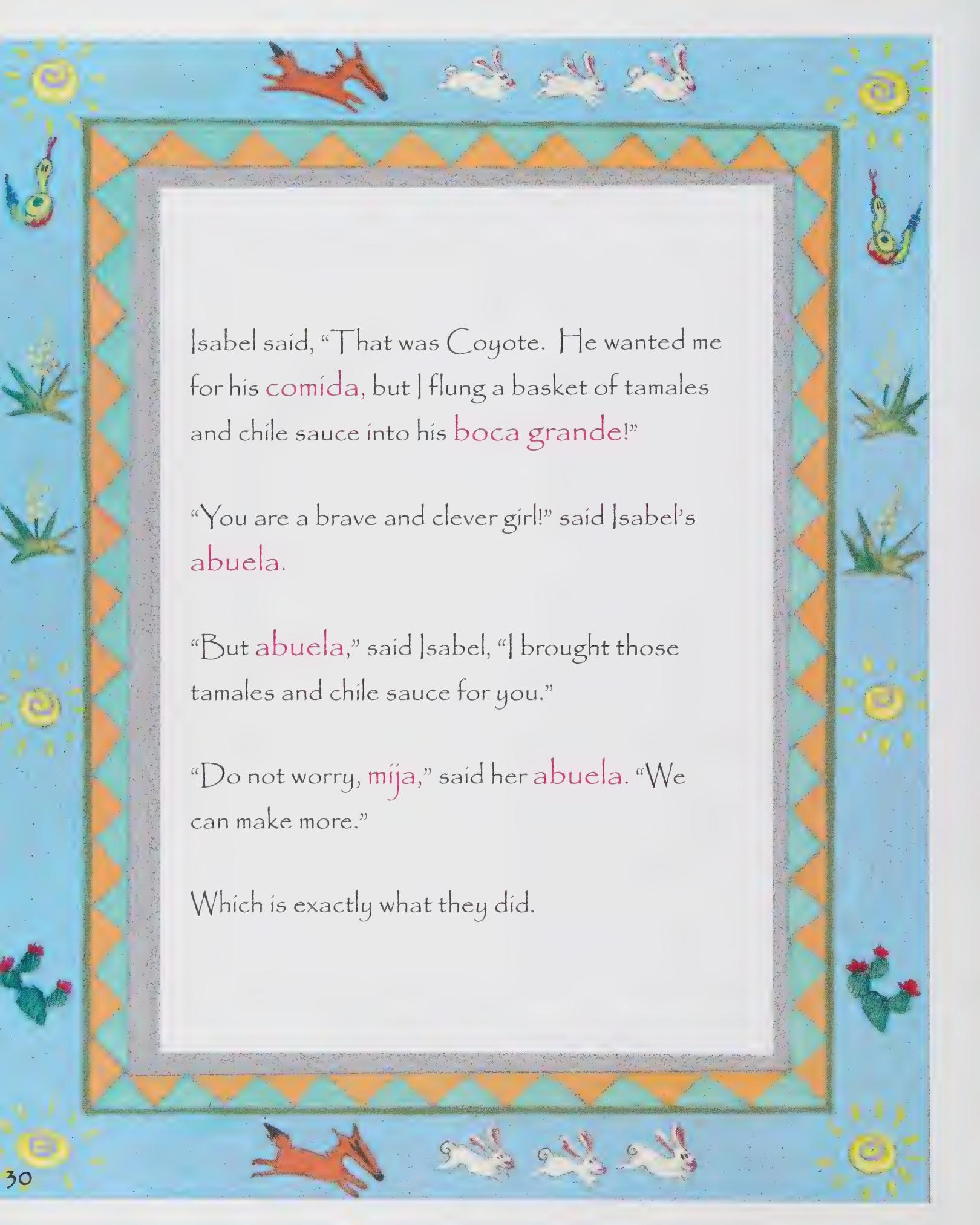
Isabel listened to his howls fade away.

Just then, the back door of the **casa** opened. A voice said, “**Hola**, Isabel. I am happy to see you, **mija**!”

Isabel turned. She cried, “Oh, **abuela**!” and ran and hugged her grandmother.

Isabel’s **abuela** said, “I was taking a **siesta** in the backyard. I awoke when I heard a terrible howl.”





Isabel said, "That was Coyote. He wanted me for his **comida**, but I flung a basket of tamales and chile sauce into his **boca grande!**"

"You are a brave and clever girl!" said Isabel's **abuela**.

"But **abuela**," said Isabel, "I brought those tamales and chile sauce for you."

"Do not worry, **mija**," said her **abuela**. "We can make more."

Which is exactly what they did.

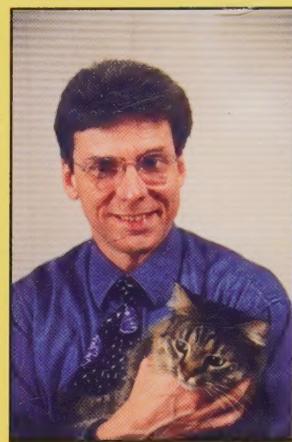


Vocabulario / Vocabulary

Spanish

English

la caperuza	hood
roja	red
las flores	flowers
el señor	sir
ay	oh
buenos días	good morning
gracias	thank you
la abuela	grandmother
el arroyo	a small desert valley
la casa	house
la comida	lunch
el fuego	fire
adiós	goodbye
hola	hello
sí	yes
los ojos	eyes
grandes	big
las orejas	ears
mija	my dear
los brazos	arms
la boca	mouth
muy grande	very big
muy fuertes	very strong
boca grande	big mouth
la siesta	nap



Keith Polette, a specialist in children's literacy, earned a Ph.D. in English from Saint Louis University, two Masters degrees from Idaho State University—one in English and one in Drama—and a BA in English from Central Methodist College. Keith is currently an Associate Professor of English and the Director

of the English Education program at the University of Texas at El Paso. His book, *The Winter Duckling*, won the International Reading Association's Children's Choice Award. In his free time, Keith enjoys martial arts, photography, hiking, canoeing, and his cat, Emily. He lives in El Paso, Texas.



Esther Szegedy was born in Toronto—a first generation kid of immigrant parents. She didn't speak English when she started school and began drawing in first grade to keep the kids from picking on her. She hasn't stopped since. A self-taught artist, Esther has a BA and a Masters degree in psychology,

specializing in expressive therapies (art and writing). Living in Hawaii allows her to draw outdoors at the picnic table, on lava rocks, and by the ocean. Esther is married and her household includes two cats, three geckos and an occasional rooster.

Free activities for this book are available at
www.raventreepress.com.

